

The Prairie Builders: Reconstructing America's Lost Grasslands (Scientists in the Field Series)

Sneed B. Collard III

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Barely a century ago a vast tallgrass prairie covered America's heartland. Bison, elk, coyotes, and bear roamed this wilderness. Hundreds of species of prairie plants supported an explosion of birds and insects, including hundreds of kinds of butterflies. By the early part of the twentieth century, however, the tallgrass prairie was gone, its rich soils converted to farms to feed a growing world population.

Here, author Sneed B. Collard III tells the remarkable story of an effort to bring back part of the native tallgrass prairie. By following scientists who are working on the 8,000-acre Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge in Iowa, readers will learn where the vision for a new prairie came from and how a dedicated group of scientists and volunteers is working to turn this vision into reality, from locating seeds of native prairie plants to using fire to drive out weeds to "bringing home" bison, elk, and one of the prairie's most spectacular butterflies, the Regal Fritillary.



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